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THE FEELING OF THE ANCIENTS FOR NATURE,
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO QUINTUS
HORATIUS FLACCUS

The Feeling of the Ancients for Nature is so large a subject that I must state my limitations of it at once in order to show that I purpose no exhaustive treatment but only a suggestive sketch. I shall outline first of all the literature of the subject, taking it up in historical order, then try to state in a general way certain characteristics of the feeling for nature among the Greeks and the Romans. Lastly, to illustrate the proper method of approach to antiquity, I will analyze the feeling for nature in Horace.

The first epoch-making work in the comparison of the ancient and the modern feeling for nature was Schiller's essay, *Über naive und sentimentalische Dichtung*, written in 1795. Schiller contrasts the naive nature feeling of the ancients and the sentimental feeling of the moderns, and declares that it seems strange that among the Greeks so few traces of a sentimental interest in nature appear. He writes as follows:

If we recollect the beautiful nature which surrounded the ancient Greeks; if we recollect in what intimacy this people lived under its happy sky with free nature, how much nearer to simple nature were its conceptions, sensations, and customs, and how faithfully she is pictured in its poems, it must seem strange to us that so few traces of sentimental interest, with which we moderns cling to natural scenes and natural characters, are found among the Greeks. The Greek is eminently correct, true and circumstantial in his descriptions of nature, but no more so, nor with any more cordial interest than he manifests in the description of a costume, a shield, a breast-plate, a piece of furniture or some other mechanical product¹.

In making this generalization, Schiller had Homer in mind as the Greek, and it is this generalization of his, based on so limited a part of Greek literature, that set the tone for the traditional view of the Greek feeling toward nature. But even Schiller himself saw that so sweeping a contrast between ancient naiveté and modern sentimentalism could not hold and in the same essay he points out a sentimental tendency in Euripides and among the Romans, in Horace, Vergil and Propertius. Moreover, his poem, *Die Götter Griechenland*, recognizes the deep feeling for nature in the Greek mythology. His essay, however, set the traditional view for many years, the view that emphasized the sharp contrast between the ancient feeling for nature and the modern.

The first critic to dissent from the conventional view was Jacobs; he sensed even in Homer a real feeling for nature and his work was followed by that of Alexander von Humboldt who in his *Cosmos* admitted that the Greeks had a deep feeling for nature, but declared that this simply did not find expression in nature description for its own sake.

He says:

The description of nature in its manifold richness of form as a distinct branch of poetic literature was wholly unknown to the Greeks. The landscape appears among them merely as the background of the picture in which human figures constitute the main subject. But absence of nature descriptions does not prove absence of susceptibility to the beauties of nature where the perception of beauty was so intense¹.

Humboldt's belief in the deep nature feeling among the ancients was carried out by Metz in his treatise *Über die Empfindung der Naturschönheit bei den Alten*, but his work met no wide recognition, for it disregarded entirely the historical method of treatment, placing Ovid beside Homer, Ausonius beside Sophocles and Euripides, Plato beside Horace. More significant is the work of Woermann (1871²), who in a study of the feeling for landscape among the ancients, an introduction to a study of their landscape painting, maintained that the subject could be investigated only by an historical study of individual writers and an exposition of the genetic process of development. Friedlaender in a suggestive study in his *Darstellung aus der Sittengeschichte Roms* (1881), maintained that the feeling for nature among the ancients was not less lively and deep than the modern, but was confined to narrower boundaries; that in general the ancients responded only to the charming and the bright, while roughness, wildness, majesty to them shut out beauty.

By far, however, the most stimulating and instructive work done on the subject is that of Alfred Biese in his book *Die Entwicklung des Naturgefühls bei den Griechen und Römern*. Biese gives first in an introductory chapter an historical resumé of the work done in the field, then studies in three chapters "the naive feeling for nature in Homer", "the sympathetic feeling for nature in lyric and drama", and lastly, "the sentimental-idyllic nature-feeling of the Hellenistic period and the Empire". The historical method is used throughout and every statement made is supported by quotations or references. The same line of treatment is carried out in the study of the Roman feeling for nature and the volume must be the point of departure for all future investigators of any period, author, or problem in this field.

In English work, three writers must be mentioned in view of their contributions to the thought on the ancient feeling for nature. Ruskin's name is famous for two dicta: first, that "the pathetic fallacy" in nature description is essentially modern, and second that the Greek ideal of a landscape was composed of "a fountain, a meadow, and a shady grove". Ruskin, to be sure, modifies both statements, admitting that in certain Greek writers there were traces of the pathetic fallacy, and that this ideal of landscape was peculiarly Homer's. Yet to him as to Schiller, Homer was *the*

¹ Hempel's translation, 2.554-555.

² *Cosmos* 2.373-374.

² *Über den landschaftlichen Natursinn der Landschaftsmalerei*.

Greek and his generalizations were to his own mind justified. J. C. Shairp in his *Poetic Interpretation of Nature* criticized Ruskin's idea of the Greek ideal of a landscape as based almost entirely on the *Odyssey* and pointed out that in the *Iliad* the similes take their descriptions of nature from every source, mountain, forest, sea in storm, cloudy sky, so that not only the tame and the domestic in nature are appreciated. A more significant treatise for the subject is S. H. Butcher's essay on *The Dawn of Romanticism in Greek Poetry*¹. In this essay, Butcher points out that the distinction between ancient and modern, classical and romantic has been too sharply drawn and that within Greek literature itself there was preparation "for a new attitude towards the things of the heart and another mode of contemplating the universe without". He makes, however, this change of sentiment set in only from the time of Alexander with a bare suggestion of a romantic tendency in Euripides. He attributes the new feeling in the Alexandrian era to three causes: the slow death of the old polytheistic beliefs of Greece which had supported the mythological representation of nature; the foreign travel and scientific research which brought about close observation of nature; and the rise of great cities in the Alexandrian age which produced a sentimental regret for the loss of country life.

Certain works on special periods suggest the line which recent work in the field has followed. H. R. Fairclough's admirable thesis on *The Attitude of the Greek Tragedians toward Nature* is a scholarly and detailed study. Its significance lies in tracing the development of the pathetic fallacy in Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides—a vital refutation of Ruskin's statement that it is modern, and in his proving that Euripides was a romanticist in his treatment of nature in his frequent use of the pathetic fallacy, in his intense love of nature, and in the longing for her solitudes expressed in his plays.

A thesis by Katharine Allen on *The Treatment of Nature in the Poetry of the Roman Republic* (exclusive of Comedy) is illuminating for Roman literature and suggests the possibilities of work in this field on other authors. The method followed is a detailed study of each poet in regard to (1) various aspects of nature: sky, sea, streams, mountains, woods, plants, animals; the figurative use of each; its literal representation; the epithets used; (2) his feeling and attitude towards nature: the personalization of nature; the aesthetic sense; the sense of sympathy between man and nature.

E. T. McLaughlin has an essay on *The Mediaeval Feeling for Nature* in his *Studies in Mediaeval Life and Literature*, a brief but suggestive account. The conclusion is that:

The northern poets described storm, winter, the

ocean, and kindred subjects with considerable force and fulness. In the cultivated literatures to the south, natural description was mainly confined to the agreeable forms of beauty.... The exterior world was not made a subject of close observation, nor was its poetic availability realized as a setting for action, or as an interpreter of emotion.

John Veitch wrote a book in two volumes on *The Feeling for Nature in Scottish Poetry*, tracing the growth of the Scottish "love for free, wild nature", the tendency to indulge in minute description, and "the imaginative sympathy for the grand and powerful in nature".

F. W. Moorman is the author of *The Interpretation of Nature in English Poetry from Beowulf to Shakespeare*, a scholarly study in fifteen chapters of the development in the English feeling for nature and "the influence of one poet upon another and of one period of poetry upon succeeding periods".

Myra Reynolds in a doctor's dissertation studies another period of the English field, *The Treatment of Nature in English Poetry between Pope and Wordsworth*. The plan of her work is (1) a general statement of the chief characteristics in the treatment of nature by the English classical poets; (2) a detailed study of the eighteenth century poets who show some new conception of nature; (3) studies of eighteenth century landscape gardening, fiction, books of travel and painting. The book is both scholarly and readable.

The work that I myself have done, if I may be permitted to speak of my own dissertation, *The Sea in Greek Poetry*, differs from the special studies described in taking for its theme instead of a particular period, author, or kind of poetry, one special element in nature, the sea, and endeavoring to focus on it the Greek feeling for nature. I felt that the sea was so informing and vital a part of Greek life that an historical study of its appeal to the Greek mind as expressed in Greek poetry could not but yield some interesting results. The subject divided itself naturally into three parts: the mythological treatment of the sea; the sea as imaginative background in Greek tragedy; and the feeling of sympathy between man and the sea¹.

From this review of the literature of the subject we may draw certain conclusions in regard to the ancient and the modern feeling for nature. First of all, it is important to reiterate that no sharp dividing line between the ancient and the modern feeling should be made. The ancients did have intense feeling for nature. In many ways this feeling was like the modern, in other ways it was distinctly different from it. Then, secondly, appreciation of the ancient feeling for nature must be based on historical, genetic study of ancient literature, a care-

¹ There is what seems to me an admirable discussion of the attitude of the Greeks toward nature in the first chapter of the book entitled *Greek Lands and Letters*, by Professor and Mrs. F. G. Allinson. (1909 See THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 3:147-148). C. K.

¹ In *Some Aspects of the Greek Genius*, 245-321.

ful study of individual authors in chronological order. Thirdly, certain characteristics of the ancient feeling for nature may be predicated, but extreme care should be taken in making generalizations as one dictum after another that has been made in the past has had to be modified or withdrawn. We have seen how Ruskin's statement that the pathetic fallacy in nature description was essentially modern was disproved as well as his declaration that the Greek ideal of a landscape was a fountain, a meadow and a shady grove. In the same way, Friedlaender's statement that the ancient feeling for nature was limited to the charming and the bright is by far too extreme and in line with that also is to be rejected the conventional belief that the ancients felt only fear for the sea.

Certain tendencies, however, in the ancient attitude towards the outer world may be noted and here Alfred Biese is the safest guide. I shall give some of his conclusions mingled with comments of my own. First of all, the Greek feeling for nature is manifested in an elaborate mythology. To the Greek, Pan was always abroad in the land, the nymphs laughed in the waterfalls, hamadryads hid in the oaks, and the sea was the home of Proteus, Nereus, Oceanus and a host of other gods. These beings often met man and held converse with him. So since nature's life was very near man's and very like it communion with it was natural. Homer is full of this nature mythology used in the most fresh and charming manner and indeed its use persists all down through Greek poetry. Always the Greeks felt nature so near themselves, so like themselves that it was easy to

Catch sight of Proteus rising from the sea
And hear old Triton blow his wreathéd horn.

Another way in which the Greeks showed their sense of the nearness of the life of man to the life of nature was in the use of metaphors and similes comparing man's life to the life of nature. From Homer down through the Alexandrians their poetry is full of these comparisons, showing on one hand keen observation of nature in the details of the pictures, and on the other voicing the sense of the inner unity of the life of man and the life of the outer world.

The Greeks moreover felt a sympathy between man and nature from the earliest times. There are traces of this feeling in Homer, but the lyric and the tragic poetry from their inherent nature developed it more fully. In the tragedians especially this sympathy is strikingly expressed by the use of nature as setting for the mood of man, for the tragedians supplemented the bare simplicity of the actual staging of their plays by a richness of mental background that compensated for any material lack. The Ajax and the Philoctetes of Sophocles are striking examples of the use of the sea for setting to mental and

bodily suffering, and of a strong feeling of sympathy between man and nature (the scene so in harmony with Ajax's lonely suicide; the deserted Philoctetes finding at last companionship in rocks and woods). In Euripides in addition to this use of nature as a sympathetic background for man's moods there appears an intense longing for the lonely places of the outer world, a desire to escape from the struggle of life to their peace and healing. Hippolytus lives in the wood; Phaedra longs to escape from her passion to the mountains, or the clouds, or the sea-shore; the Bacchantes go mad with ecstasy in the joy of the forest.

In the Hellenistic period of Greek poetry, a new attitude towards nature appears; this Biese calls a sentimental-idyllic nature feeling. This new feeling Butcher, as I have said, ascribes to a rational attitude towards the old mythology, to the foreign travel and research stimulated by Alexander's conquests, and to the rise of great cities in the Alexandrian age which by the very pressure and complexity of their life turned men's thoughts to the refuge of the country. As Biese says:

All this was reflected in their poetry. The source of poetry was no longer the free imagination, creative, full of spirit, but work in imitation of the great models, reflection which analyzed every thought and feeling and a full self-consciousness.

Self-consciousness and self-analysis produced the sentimental feeling of the time, the desire to escape from city to country in order to get more freedom for inner life produced the idyllic poetry. The change in nature feeling appears especially in descriptions of country where the shepherds sing of their loves and of their feeling for nature. Descriptions of nature are introduced first in this period for their own sake instead of simply to illustrate man's mood in some comparison or to form a background for human action and feeling.

The Roman attitude towards nature differed from the Greek in many ways. In the first place, the naiveté of the early Greek world was always strange to the Romans. Their spiritual life never had a happy Homeric childhood; from the first, rather, among the Romans, reflection and thought overbalanced imagination and feeling. Their religion had no beautiful mythology until it adopted the Greek hierarchy of gods, and their early attitude towards nature is probably fittingly represented by the writings of Marcus Porcius Cato which are purely prosaic and utilitarian in character. But early in Rome's literary history "captive Greece took captive her fierce conqueror" and the Romans in their attitude towards nature were largely influenced by the Greeks. So the points already made in regard to the Greek attitude towards nature (the mythological representation of it, the use of figures comparing man's life and that of nature, the idyllic attitude), hold good of the Roman feeling and to give some idea of what

is peculiarly Roman, it is necessary to characterize the feeling for nature of individual Latin poets rather than the tendencies of large periods of thought.

The early poets of the Republic, Ennius and the tragedians, show a borrowing from Greek sources in their pictures of nature—a borrowing from no one particular period but from any that suited their need: Homer, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Euripides. Lucretius is much more significant for our subject than the earlier men. In his *De rerum natura*, a philosophical poem written from the Epicurean standpoint, he separates the deities of the people's thought from the world and places them in a happy, passive existence, undisturbed by wind or storm. He then explains the constitution of the universe by a simple version of the atomic theory which is still for scientific thought its basic hypothesis. This rationalistic treatment of nature elevates man who does not bow before gods, overpowered by a sense of dependence upon them, but observes with wonder and awe free nature which is his true friend. Nature also teaches man to enjoy herself and so Lucretius gives some beautiful pictures of the outer world. Through his teachings he was the founder for Rome of a knowledge of nature.

In contrast to this reflective and philosophic attitude of Lucretius towards nature, Catullus strikes a pure lyric note, making nature illustrate or sympathize with his own intense feeling. His bright days and his happiness are identical; spring stirs alike nature and his heart; his Lesbia's kisses must be as many as the sands or the stars. He paints the figure of his Attis, frenzied with religious fanaticism, against a dark background of desolate sea that suits his mood, and bereft Ariadne, standing by the pitiless ocean, is beaten by great waves of misfortune. The ardor of Catullus's feeling goes out not only to the beauty of his lady, but to beauty in the world about him and he shows almost as intense feeling for particular places as he does for particular people.

In contrast to the nature feeling in the poetry of the Republican period when the Romans were first awkwardly finding themselves in the field of literature, then closely imitating the Greeks, and at last developing two such striking personalities as Lucretius and Catullus, the Augustan age shows conspicuously an elegiac-idyllic nature feeling. In this period of peace, as the complexity of life in the city grew apace, there arose, as before among the Greeks in the Alexandrian age, the longing for eternally pure and free nature and an idyllic poetry which expressed this longing.

Vergil expresses this feeling in his *Eclogues* in the pictures of the life of the shepherds under the trees, in the *Georgics* in the picture of the farmer's life. Throughout these poems as well as in the *Aeneid* (where he imitates Homer in nature similes and mythology) he shows a tender, dreamy feeling for

nature and a sense of the deep sympathy existing between the outer world and man. "Vergil's attitude towards nature, however, is complex", as J. B. Duff well brings out in his new *Literary History of Rome*. He shows that in Vergil's attitude towards nature two principles strive to assert themselves. The one

is philosophic, the other is romantic. Vergil is conscious of these contending tastes. Reverently impressed by Lucretius, he cherishes an aspiration to solve the riddle of the universe on scientific principles. Failing in this he falls back on a simple love of nature's beautiful things. He has himself placed both attitudes side by side in the second *Georgic*.

First may the Muses, sweet beyond compare,
Whose acolyte I am, deep smit with love,
Receive and teach me of heaven's star-lit paths;
The sun's eclipses, travail of the moon;
Earthquakes; the force by which deep oceans swell,
Burst bars and ebb upon themselves again;
Why winter suns make so much haste to dip
At sea, what sloth besets the laggard nights.
But if tame blood at heart shall bar my hopes
To track such portions of the universe,
Then fields and brooks in glens shall gladden me,
Lover of stream and wood unknown to fame.

The elegists of the Augustan age each in his own way manifest the idyllic nature feeling. Tibullus, tender and delicate, has a love for the quiet loneliness of country life and combines with a sense of old Roman piety and with his personal passion this inner, idyllic nature feeling. Propertius's work is a mixture of mythological learning, passion, and deep feeling for the peace and charm which nature and the natural in contrast to the city and the cultivated give. Ovid shows a rich observation of nature in the pictures of his innumerable similes, in frequent personalization, and in brilliant use of Greek nature myths turning on some metamorphosis. These three elegists, Tibullus, Propertius, and Ovid, blend their nature descriptions with idyllic and erotic motives.

In the Empire, conditions tended to deepen interest in nature. More and more was life in country villas sought as relief from city luxury. The increasing study of philosophy also deepened the interest in nature and the peace and quiet of the country were sought as a relief from the moral evils of the times. But the growing interest in nature was not expressed again with the originality of a Catullus or a Vergil, but rather followed conventional lines of close imitation. Seneca is the most interesting figure for us of these latter days, for his poetry shows a broad philosophical-religious treatment of nature and teaches that the contemplation of nature leads man to a loftier state of mind.

From this brief review of the feeling for nature in Latin poetry, I wish to go back now to the poetry of Quintus Horatius Flaccus.

If one is interested in a scholarly and minute study of Horace's feeling for nature I would refer him to two books on the subject: a pamphlet on *Die Natur in der Dichtung des Horaz*, by Edward Voss (1889),

and a one volume treatise, *Horaz als Freund der Natur nach seinen Gedichten*, by Franz Hawrlant (1895). I myself will try simply to point out what Horace saw in the out-door world, and how he used nature in his poetry.

His taste for out-door life was set early by the happy fact that he was a country child. Son of a peasant father who had been a slave but had been freed, Horace was born on a farm in southern Italy. The sloping hills of Apulia and the loud-roaring Aufidus river are among his first impressions. He has a charming myth of his babyhood: how when he was lost in the woods, the doves covered him with leaves and the gods kept him from bears and vipers. He knows, moreover, out of that life with the peasants, many folk tales, country lore taught him by old wives and simple farmers. Though he left Apulia early for an education in Rome and, as far as we know, never went back again to stay, his birth-place haunted his memory and the name of Apulia reechoes through his poetry.

He went back to a country life again after many years, though not in Apulia. When his education was finished in Rome and Athens, and he had fought on the side of Brutus for a losing cause, he had gone back to Rome to find his father dead, his father's farm confiscated by the triumvirs, so that he had to struggle with both poverty and loneliness. As a relief from the monotony of a secretaryship to a quaestor, he began to write; his poetry won him the friendship of Vergil and then that of Maecenas, and that great literary patron of the Augustan age gave him in the year 33 B.C. a small farm in the Sabine hills. Horace has given us a loving description of it: its encircling mountains, its "living river near the door", its oak-trees and woodland¹; and he makes us see towering up over his villa the tall pine which he dedicates to Diana, guardian of mountains and groves².

The poet tells us in various ways all that his farm and life in the country meant to him. It meant good health first of all. In a frank letter, written in response to Maecenas's urgent invitation to come to the city, he tells his patron that if he wishes him to be wholly sound in mind and truly well in body, he must let him linger on in the country³, and to Tibullus, a brother poet, he writes of the health-giving forests⁴. The country gave him also leisure and inspiration to write. "The whole band of poets loves the woods and shuns the city"⁵, he says. "The waters which flow by fertile Tibur and the thick-leaved trees are what make a man famous for a strain of lyric song"⁶. "Do you suppose that the poet can compose lyrics in the midst of the distractions and noise of city life?"⁷

Then in the country too (to follow Horace's

reasoning), one may live the simple life in accordance with nature. "Here one really lives and reigns" says Horace. "Scorn great possessions. Under a humble roof one may surpass the life of kings and friends of kings"⁸. So Horace the Stoic spoke and then again a Cyrenaic mood would come upon him (and who of us does not vacillate between the tendencies of those old philosophies?) and he would praise nature for the sensuous enjoyment of the moment that she so richly gives. "Sleep on the grass near a running brook", beneath a shady tree, fragrance of roses in the air, a jug of wine at hand⁹—Horace knew the delights of all this as well as Omar Khayyam.

But the country gave Horace still more than health, poetic inspiration, the simple life of the Stoic, and Sensuous joy. It gave him an acquaintance with the farmers about him, philosophers apart from the schools with a native mother wit which made their comments on life shrewd and picturesque.

This brings me to my second point: how did Horace use in his poetry the outer world with which he was so familiar? In the first place, he was so imbued with Greek literature and life that he felt as naturally as any Greek the mythology of the nature world and used it in his verse. In spring-time, he sees in magical moonlight Venus leading the dance of the nymphs and the Graces, knows, as the heavens reverberate, that the Cyclops have forged new thunderbolts for Vulcan, knows too that on his own farm Faunus walks through his fields in all kindness and takes care of the tender younglings of the flock, and he swears that he himself has seen Bacchus in a lonely spot teaching the nymphs and the satyrs to sing. The charm of such personalization of nature is so intense that we covet with Wordsworth the pagan vision of the gods as "glimpses that would make us less forlorn".

In his poetry again Horace shows his feeling for nature in figures comparing the life of man to the life of nature. The course of the seasons is a favorite illustration for the life of man. The snows of winter melt when the grass returns to the fields and the leaves to the trees. But summer treads fast upon the heels of spring and when autumn has poured forth her fruit sluggish winter returns. So the cycle of nature goes on, but when once we have departed where Aeneas went, we are dust and shade. Not to hope for immortality is the lesson of the changing year¹⁰. Innumerable similes compare man to animals. Cleopatra is the timid hare fleeing from Octavius¹¹, Drusus is the young eagle or a lion in pursuit of the enemy¹², Chloe is the timid fawn following her mother in the trackless forest¹³, Horace himself is now the hog of Epicurus's sty¹⁴, now the Matinian bee gathering the honey of his poems from

¹ *Epp.* 1. 16.1-16.

² *C.* 3.22.

³ *Epp.* 1.7.

⁴ *Epp.* 1.4.4.

⁵ *Epp.* 2.2.78.

⁶ *C.* 4.3. 10-12.

⁷ *Epp.* 2.65-66.

⁸ *Epp.* 1.10.

⁹ *C.* 1.37.17-21.

¹⁰ *Epp.* 1.4.35; *C.* 2.3.5-12.

¹¹ *C.* 4.4.1-21.

¹² *C.* 1.23

¹³ *C.* 4.7

¹⁴ *Epp.* 1.4.16

every flower¹⁵. Illustrations are drawn too from the plant world. The color of youth is like the color of roses¹⁶; ruined beauty is like an arid oak-tree¹⁷; Achilles is as mighty as a great pine¹⁸. Again man is compared to a stream. Lucilius's imperfect verse ran along like a muddy brook¹⁹; Pindar's impetuous style was like a mountain torrent²⁰. The heavens furnish other comparisons. A frowning face is like a cloud-covered sky²¹; beauty of body is like the gleam of the stars²²; Augustus's presence is like the light of spring on the world²³. There are scores of these comparisons which on the one hand indicate how near Horace felt man and nature to be and on the other hand give us nature pictures which show his keen observation of the outer world.

And from these pictures we find what Horace most enjoyed in nature. He delighted in running water (brooks and streams), loved trees (pines, oaks, plane-trees, and elms), was glad of flowers (the myrtle and the rose), watched animals with feeling for their beauty and a certain tenderness for the helpless victim brought to the altar and the yearlings of the flock, subject to so many dangers. He watched too the larger phases of nature: observed the changing seasons, saw moonlight and sunlight on the world, heard the echo that the rocks sent forth. Moreover, he took delight in special places and these in spite of his life in Greece were all Italian. He has told us of the corner of the world that charms him beyond all others, singing with deep affection of Tarentum's happy heights where spring is long and winter mild. He has sung lovingly too of Tibur in the Sabine hills where the rushing Anio river waters the green orchards. And he has made his Sabine farm unforgettable.

You will not find long, detailed descriptions of nature, given for their own sake. Perhaps the poem on the Fons Bandusiae (3.13) is his one nature poem. But you will find close observation and keen delight. You will find few descriptions that shew appreciation of the grand and the sublime. The sea is mentioned only with dread of danger and storm. But you will find according to my belief a very genuine love of the country for the freedom of its simple life, for the good health it bestows on all and the inspiration it gives to the poet, and for its inherent beauty.

Certain objections may be raised by those who do not consider Horace a sincere lover of nature. Horace, such persons would say, admitted himself that he was not constant in his affection for nature and he was guarded often rather than enthusiastic in his expression of feeling about it. The first statement is true. Horace does speak of himself in two places as fickle in his attitude towards country life, once in Epistle 1. 8. 12, where he declares "At Rome I love Tibur, and, fickle fellow that I am, at Tibur love Rome" and again in Satire 2. 7, where Davus,

Horace's slave, brings the same charge against his master, saying "At Rome you long for the country, but in the country you extol to the stars the absent city, light-minded that you are". But these charges can hardly be taken seriously for Horace himself refuses to be taken seriously about anything, or to claim consistency²⁴.

Horace then will seem at last and rightly a poet who had rather a contemplative attitude than a sensuous towards nature. He does not elaborate color, sound, or touch. He sees nature virtually always in its relations to persons, either personalizing its attributes to deities, or comparing its life to man's life, or drawing from its aspects lessons for man. And yet his poems read as a whole show the large part the country played in his happiness, that he sincerely felt its beauties, and that in the quiet, contemplative habit of his temperament he loved it.

I have used Horace's feeling for nature simply as an illustration of the larger theme, the feeling of the ancients for nature, hoping by a brief study of a particular author to emphasize some of the general points I have tried to make: first, that no sharp dividing line can be drawn between the ancient feeling for nature and the modern; second, that each Greek and Latin author must be studied individually, yet viewed in the light of the historical development of his national literature and his place in it; that if any generalizations about the ancient feeling for nature can be safely made, they are that the ancients personalized nature more than the moderns, that they did not in general describe nature for its own sake, but as setting to man or as illustration of his life, and that they did not enjoy as much as the moderns the beauty of the grand and the sublime in nature, especially in mountains and the sea. But both Greeks and Romans, however much they differed from the modern way of looking at the outer world, so lived in it, so knew it that it makes the great and varied background of their poetry.

VASSAR COLLEGE.

ELIZABETH HAZELTON HAIGHT.

On May 13, The Classical Club of Philadelphia completed fifteen years of prosperous existence. The Club was organized by Dr. Alfred Gudeman; its membership is open to all men interested in the Classics. The number of members at present is 42.

There are six meetings yearly, devoted to a paper, discussion, presentation of interesting bits of classical information, and good fellowship. On May 13, Professor H. T. Peck was the guest of the Club and spoke on Reminiscences of a Classicist.

B. W. MITCHELL.

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¹⁵ C. 4. 2. 27. ¹⁶ C. 4. 10. 17. ¹⁷ C. 4. 13. 9. ¹⁸ C. 4. 6. 9. ¹⁹ Sat. 1. 10. 50.
²⁰ C. 4. 2. 5. ²¹ Epp. 1. 18. 94. ²² C. 3. 9. 21. ²³ C. 4. 5. 5.

²⁴ In Volume 4 of THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY I shall discuss in detail Epode 2 in its relation to my general theme.